



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT PARIS. Edited by Edward Mandell House, United States Commissioner Plenipotentiary, and Charles Seymour, Litt.D., Professor of History in Yale University. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

"We may take the partisan view," writes Isaiah Bowman, in his chapter on Constantinople and the Balkans, "that idealism faded and died, or we may take the view that here and there something was accomplished that was far better than the world had known hitherto." Perhaps the two views are not mutually exclusive. At Paris there was, it is generally felt, a shocking breakdown of idealism, and the world has not altogether recovered from the shock. But what was accomplished may prove of value. The latter, of course, is the view of the highly qualified experts who have contributed to the book, *What Really Happened at Paris*.

These writers naturally emphasize the difficulties inherent in the whole situation. In the opinion of the competent military authorities, it would have been unsafe to postpone the armistice. For all anyone knew in November, 1918, Germany might have held out for months, and continuance of the war might have meant a political revolution in every one of the Allied countries except the United States. The basis of the Peace was therefore virtually what it had to be. When the negotiations began, "each little country that had associated itself with the Allies against the Central Powers, demanded a place for its representatives in a scene adequate in dignity and impressiveness to the World War." Something had to be done for show and for the satisfaction of public opinion. But obviously business could not well be transacted in a huge debating society, and so the Council of Ten was inevitable. Inevitably, too, the Council of Ten was virtually shelved and replaced by the Council of Four. Japan, on account of its practical political importance, had to be given recognition while other Powers were denied it—there was no other way. When the actual question of boundaries came up for discussion, it was found practically impossible to draw these on truly national lines. What are national lines? Political considerations had to weigh with the leaders who necessarily decided the major questions. They decided them in secret, for "an attempt to realize at this time the ideal of 'open covenants openly arrived at' might readily have started another war, and would certainly have delayed interminably the agreement on terms of peace." Secret treaties stood in the way of ideally just solutions, yet something was accomplished in spite of them, largely through the work of President Wilson. All in all, it proved virtually impossible "to make a clear-cut distinction between what is right from the standpoint of ethnography, nationalistic sentiment, and abstract justice, and what is fair from the standpoint of economic advantage." As a result there were arbitrary decisions and unsatisfactory compromises—no end of them.

But it is unfair to suppose that no question was thoroughly sifted. The numerous special commissions of well-trusted experts labored hard, and much of their thought was embodied fully in the treaty. In dealing with this phase of the story, the authors have shown excellent good sense, and they have pro-

duced a book that is informing, non-controversial, and well proportioned. They have told enough to convince, enough to disillusion, not enough to confuse. As might be expected, they stress the thought that under the circumstances no inconsiderable results were accomplished. If there is on the part of experts actually engaged in the work of peace-making a certain disposition to see results as large because their labors were large, nothing of this appears in their statements of facts.

It cannot be said that *What Really Happened at Paris* is an optimistic book. It is simply a statement of facts, embodying a common-sense view of the treaty. It is not an enlightening book in the sense that it anticipates or tries to anticipate the verdicts of history. There is in it no criticism of peoples, very little criticism of the leaders. All this is as it should be, for it enables the book to perform its true function—not that of enabling the man in the street to make head or tail of the peace problems, for that neither he nor his intellectual superiors can really do, but that of steadying public opinion and abashing hasty and over-confident criticism. Sometime, we feel, we must have the whole philosophy of the Peace—not yet. Meanwhile *What Really Happened at Paris* is perhaps as good a book as could be written on the subject. The names of its authors—including such names as Hoover, Lamont, Scott, Young, Mayo, and Bliss—are guarantees of knowledge, honesty, and sanity.